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E.O. 12065: GDS 1/15/86 (DUBOSE, R.)
TAGS: PINT, JM, ALOW
SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT UNDER PRESSURE, FIGHTS BACK

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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1. C-ENTIRE TEXT.
2. SUMMARY: THE LONG-AWAITED CARL STONE POLL SHOWS THAT THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOR PARTY (JLP) HAS ASSUMED A LARGE, ALMOST UNASSAILABLE LEAD OVER THE URLING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP). PUBLICATION OF THE POLL, A CALL BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR ON THE GOVERNMENT TO RESIGN, EMPTY SHELVES, ELECTRICAL BLACKOUTS, A RAILROAD CLOSEDOWN, AND MANY OTHER TROUBLES ARE PUTTING MUCH PRESSURE ON MANLEY AND THE PNP. THE PARTY CALLED A SPECIAL MEETING OVER THE WEEKEND TO COUNTER SOME OF THESE BLOWS, BUT ITS EFFORTS APPEARED WEAK AND UNCONVINCING. END SUMMARY.
3. SPARKED BY THE RAPIDLY DETERIORATING ECONOMIC AND

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INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SITUATION, MRE AND MORE PRESSURE IS BEING PUT ON THE GOVERNMENT TO RESIGN EITHER IN FAVOR OF A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT PENDING ELECTIONS OR SIMPLY RESIGN AND CALL FOR ELECTIONS.
4. AS THIS IS BEING WRITTEN, VIRTUALLY THE ENTIRE ISLAND IS INTO ITS SECOND DAY WITHOUT ELECTRICITY, CAUSED BY A WALKOUT OF THE POWER STATION SUPERVISORS LAST NIGHT UNDER THE AEGIS OF A FEISTY, LEFTIST LITTLE UNION, THE UNION OF TECHNICAL AND SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL (UTASP). THE RAILROADS IS COMPLETELY CLOSED DOWN, THIS DONE BY THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH WAS TIRED OF PAYING SALARIES WHILE THERE WAS A DE FACTO CLOSEDOWN BECAUSE OF A SICKOUT. THE BIGGEST SINGLE PROBLEM, HOWEVER, IS THE TOTAL LACK OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT EXCHEQUER. THIS HAS MEANT, INTER ALIA, THAT WE HAVE HAD NO BREAD AVAILABLE SINCE MID-DECEMBER. MANLEY IS

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IN DEEP TROUBLE, AND IS CURRENTLY IN WASHINGTON BEGGING THE IMF FOR HELP.

5. MUCH OF THE POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE LAST FEW DAYS HAS BEEN SPARKED BY: (A) PUBLICATION OF THE LONG-AWAITED AND HIGHLY RESPECTED CARL STONE POLL ON JANUARY 13. IT SHOWED THAT IN THE NOVEMBER-DECEMBER POLLING PERIOD, 47 PERCENT OF THOSE POLLED SUPPORT THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOR PARTY (JLP); 35 PERCENT SUPPORT THE OGVERNING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP); 2 PERCENT SUPPORT THE COMMUNIST WORKERS PARTY OF JAMAICA (IN A DE FACTO COALITION, FOR ELECTORAL PURPOSES, WITH THE PNP); AND 16 PERCENT ARE UNDECIDED; (B) A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATION OF JAMAICA (PSOJ), WHICH VOTED OVERWHELMINGLY, BUT NOT WITHOUT SOME IMPORTANT OPPOSITION (INCLUDING ITS PRESIDENT), TO DEMAND THE RESIGNATION OF THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT.

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6. TO FLAG AND ENCOURAGE THE FAITHFUL, AND TO COUNTER THE ABOVE EVENTS, THE RULING PNP CALLED AN UNSSUAL (AND EXPENSIVE), DELEGATES CONFERENCE ON JANUARY 14-15, WHICH REPORTEDLY BROUGHT OUT 2,500 DELEGATES FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY. THE CONFERENCE VOTED "UNANIMOUSLY" TO REJECT "UNCONSITUTIONAL" SOLUTIONS FOR THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, I.E., RESIGNING OR FORMING A NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT. THE PNP THEN, RATHER PATHETICALLY, REVEALED ITS OWN POLL (PROVENANCE AND POLLSTERS NOT MENTIONED) WHICH SHOWED, INDEED, THE COMBINED PNP-WPJ STRENGTH STILL AHEAD OF THE JLP, WITH A LARGE 24 PERCENT UNDECIDED. IN OTHER ACTIONS, AND SPEECHES, THE CONFERENCE IN GENERAL BLAMED THE COUNTRY'S DIFFICULTIES ON IMPERIALISM, CAPITALISM, AND PARTICULARLY THE IMF. CONSPICUOUS BY THEIR LOW-KEY PARTICIPATION WERE THE PARTY BIG-WIGS, THOUGH, OF COURSE, MANLEY AND COMPANY WERE THERE. THE END-OF-CONFERENCE PRESS CONFERENCE, WHICH GOT HEAVY PLAY ON THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED MEDIA, WAS CONDUCTED ENTIRELY BY DEPUTY PARTY SECRETARY DR. PAUL ROBERTSON, WHO HAS GOOD ACADEMIC, IDEOLOGICAL, AND INTELLECTUAL CREDENTIALS BUT, ADMITTEDLY EVEN BY HIM, HAS LITTLE FUTURE AS A TV PERSONALITY.

7. COMMENT: THE PNP IS CLEARLY LOSING ON POINTS, AND THE PRESSURE IS BUILDING. AS REPORTED IN A SEPTEL, HOWEVER, MUCH OF THE CURRENT PRESSURE IS SPECFICALLY NOT COMING FROM THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOR PARTY, WHICH IS LAYING LOW AND LETTING EVENTS DO ITS WORK FOR IT. ALSO, OPPOSITION LEADER EDWARD SEAGA DOES NOT WANT TO FACE AN ELECTION UNTIL THE MAJOR ECONOMIC MEDICINE IS RAMMED DOWN BY THE FALTERING GOVERNMENT, I.E. SUBSTANTIAL CUTS IN THE PUBLIC PAYROLL.

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